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DHS Publishes Family First Data

(Des Moines, Iowa) – The Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) announces the publication of a new dashboard, which tracks data related to the Family First Prevention Services Act (Family First). Family First is federal legislation that will restructure how the federal government spends money on child welfare to improve outcomes for children. Key components of Family First will include foster care prevention services such as mental health, substance abuse treatment services, in-home, parent skill-based programs that include parent education, and individual and family counseling.

Successful implementation of the Federal Family First Act is tied to:

- Safely reducing the foster care population.
- Placing children with known, stable caregivers when they cannot be safely maintained with their parents.
- Reducing the number of youth in shelter and group care settings.

Iowa is investing in evidence-based foster care prevention programs due to our commitment to strengthen and preserve family connections. Maintaining children with known caregivers, such as relatives and fictive kin helps reduce the trauma associated with placement in foster care. “We also know that Iowa, like most other states, has a racial disproportionality of black and brown children in foster care. By publicly reporting this data, we are committed to strategies that will help reduce that disparity,” said Janee Harvey, DHS Division Administrator of Child, Adult and Family Services. The dashboard will be published on a quarterly basis on the DHS website and shared widely with stakeholders. “Tracking and publishing this particular data is about transparency with our strategic partners, legislators and the public. The dashboard paints a clear picture of how implementing new policies and procedures are already beginning to improve outcomes for children in Iowa. We will continue to track this information to drive progress in our system,” stated Harvey.

The dashboard, and more information on Family First, can be found on our website [here](#).

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